



DOI 10.1515/ptse-2017-0014

PTSE 12 (3): 144-151

The Subject "Physical Education and Sport" in the Higher Schools in Bulgaria

Stefan MILETIEV

stefanmiletiev@yahoo.com

(Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Sofia, Bulgaria)

Received: 31.10.2017; Accepted: 28.11.2017

Abstract: *The purpose of this report is to present briefly some problems about the physical education and sport in higher education institutions in Bulgaria, results of a survey with students from Sofia University "St. Kl. Ohridski", as well as trends in the activities within the subject "Physical education and sport". Emphasis is placed on the inclusion of the fitness within the types of sport offered to students; the present state of the system of fitness training in the higher school is being studied.*

Keywords: physical education, sport education, education in Bulgaria

Some problems of physical education and sports in Bulgaria

The question of optimizing the motor activity of the students is directly related to the proper organization and use of the individual forms and the most appropriate methods and means for physical exercise and increasing the physical capacity of the young people.

In today's conditions of life, the sporting needs of the people are growing, which is reflected in a number of international documents¹ regulating the possibilities of everyone who wants to do sport, according to his needs and his physical potential. Building a modern system of physical education and sport is a complex and multi-purpose task.

The concept of "physical education" is defined by some specialists as a purposeful process of development of man's functional abilities, and by others as developing motor skills and training in certain movements that are specific to each type of sport (Peltekova, 2016).

¹ See: *European Charter for Sport for All* - Brussels, 1975; *International Charter for Physical Education and Sport* - Paris, 1978; *European Charter for Sport* - 1992; *European Manifesto for Young People and Sport* - Lisbon, 1995; *White Paper on Sport* - Brussels, 2007 and others.

Physical upbringing is a pedagogical process in which the goal in the broadest sense is the continuous physical improvement of the person, and the criteria for this are the health condition, the physical working capacity and the creative longevity of the people.

At present, all European and national documents ensure the availability of physical education in schools and universities. Nevertheless, the issue of insufficient knowledge of sport as a socio-biological phenomenon, the lack of an educational element about the benefits of sports is clearly highlighted. Research shows that in Bulgarian universities the educational goals of the sporting activity are achieved by acquiring knowledge about the tactics, the technique and the rules of the type of sport, as well as the physical qualities. The knowledge about the need for independent sporting exercises, which affects the future biological, culture and social development of young people (Stojev, 2013:7), is very limited.

A fundamental document on the role, place and social functions of physical education and sport is the *National Strategy for Development of Physical Education and Sports in the Republic of Bulgaria 2012-2022*. It reflects the need for a qualitative reorganization of the physical education and sports system in Bulgaria as a mandatory component of political, economic and social changes in society. The strategy outlines the main approaches and the theoretical formulations defining the main strategic goal and the main directions of the *National System of Physical Education and Sport*, the basic principles on which it is built, the scope of the system with its main structures and activities, its organization and management, with the primary and auxiliary functions of state and public institutions; the different types of support, as well as the criteria for the effectiveness of the system in the new socio-economic conditions (National Strategy, 2012-2022).

The National Program for Development of Physical Education and Sport 2013 - 2016 analyzes the state of the sport in Bulgaria and some weaknesses have been found. The Law on Physical Education and Sports provides considerable autonomy in the activities of sports organizations, but in defining the relations of the state power with the sports organizations there are inconsistencies in the realization of the powers. The lack of adequate coordination between state and public sport organizations creates a number of problems (National Program, 2013-2016).

According to Eurobarometer², as the level of physical activity of citizens, Bulgaria ranks last among the EU countries, with only 3% of regular sports and 58% never participating in sports activities. On the opportunities for sport and physical activity at home, Bulgaria ranks last among the EU member states - 46% of the surveyed state that they are not given such opportunities.

There is a tendency to increase the number of overweight people. Nearly half of Bulgarians are overweight (49.5%)³. The tendency for the fostering immobilization of the growing generation is unfortunate - 51.0% are strongly immobilized. Only 4% of Bulgarians are members of sports clubs, 3% in fitness and health clubs and 3% in other clubs⁴.

² Special Eurobarometer, Sport & Physical Activity, March 2010.

³ NSI Survey 2008

⁴ Special Eurobarometer, Sport & Physical Activity, March 2010.

In the National Program for Development of Physical Education and Sport it is found that the activity of the registered school sports clubs in the country is very low and formal, in practice in most of them there is no training and sports competition activity. It is a practice that teaching physical education lessons in the initial stage is not to be conducted by specialists, the third lesson on the subject Physical Education and Sport (PES) in schools is not carried out as intended, many of the students are freed from the lessons of the PES. It is pointed out that the state of university sports is no different. The availability of relatively good and suitable sports facilities for student sports is rare.

The state of scientific and medical insurance does not meet the modern requirements of training and competition. The main role and responsibility in the realization of the common ideas for development of sport in the national sports system is given to the state and local authorities and sports organizations. Sport educators have a key role to play in reforming, by their education and continuing training.

Physical education and sport in higher schools

After the democratic changes in 1989 a new model of management of physical education and sport was created in Bulgaria. In 1996 the National Assembly adopted a "Law on Physical Education and Sport", through which a new policy of the state was adopted in principle, leading to cardinal changes in the management of physical education and sport, but at the beginning there are also some problems related to that the discipline "Physical Education and Sport" from compulsory becomes optional. In 2002, an amendment to the Act on Physical Education and Sport was adopted, which stipulates that the classes should become compulsory with a minimum of 240 hours for the Bachelor's degree and 180 hours for the "Specialist" (Act, 2014).

In 2011, following a change in the "Rules for the Application of the Law on Physical Education and Sport" (Regulations / Amend 2014), compulsory physical education and sports activities in higher education institutions are accepted for 60 hours for educational and qualification Bachelor's degree and Master's degree, which can be carried out beyond the maximum number of hours required to acquire the respective degree of education. The organized sports activity outside the obligatory hours in the Higher Education Institutions is performed by student sports clubs.

Since 2007, many higher education institutions have introduced a compulsory form of education (students choose the type of sport according to their capabilities and interests, which aims to improve the place and importance of sport as a discipline). Each higher education institution only determines the form, size and requirements of students in physical education.

The National Strategy and the Program for the Development of Physical Education and Sports in the country create new conditions for the management and organization of physical education and sport in secondary and higher schools.

A priority for higher education institutions is the creation of a set of conditions (pedagogical, scientific, social) to attract more students into various forms of motor activity.

In the sphere of sport activity, the socio-psychological characteristics of the students typical for young people are manifested. They are determined by the biological processes and the specific conditions of the professional training of the students. The body has functionally strengthened and is able to expend a lot of physical and mental energy. During the period of study, the process of value orientation was improved in the students' field of study, the sphere of their interests expanded.

The conditions of work and learning in higher schools differ from those in secondary schools. There is a need to adapt to the new situation. *"In today's society, the learning and information congestion of students, the limited motor activity, the lack of sufficient movements in the life of a human being are extremely unfavorable to their health, physical development and capacity"* (Ivanov, 2012:47).

Sports education is a social factor for maintaining health, for all-round physical development, for stimulating work and mental capacity for work, as well as for the overall education of students. In order to expand the sporting activity more and to meet the modern requirements, it is necessary to develop the sports interests of the students.

In the secondary school, the attitude of young people towards sporting activities is largely shaped. Upon completion of their higher education, students must have built up habits for exercise and sports.

In relation to the attitude of the students towards the sport activity and their desire for sports, a survey was conducted among 330 students from different specialties, who chose the fitness as a sports discipline at Sofia University "St. Kl. Ohridski". The results show that more than half of the respondents have a definite attitude towards sport, they deal not only with fitness, but they also do sports: football, tennis, basketball, swimming, karate, cycling, ice hockey. Only 18% of other sports are involved, and 26% of respondents rely only on fitness.

Also indicative is how many times a week the students are doing sports. Much of them (42%) spend time on sports 2-3 times a week. Fewer are those who exercise every day (18%) and every other day - 26%. Some of the respondents (12%) admit that only once a week they find sporting time (Miletiev, 2017).

Sporting activities at the higher education institution support the overall educational process, maintain a high level of mental and physical working capacity of the students. According to some authors (Bachvarov, 1995), the main types of exercises can be reduced to four main directions:

- ❖ mastering and improving the management of movements in accordance with the sporting nature of the discipline practiced;
- ❖ development of the physical qualities and functional abilities of the organism;
- ❖ enhancing the mental capacity, sustainability and reliability of the thought processes in the different conditions of the internal and external environment of the organism;
- ❖ Acquiring knowledge from students to stimulate their interest in purposeful sports activities for life.

In the sphere of higher education there is a re-orientation of the goals and tasks of the sporting activity. A transition is made from a system that is geared to the formation of motor skills and vital motor skills and habits, to a system that provides knowledge of the human organism, preserving and strengthening health, a system developing the need for a healthy lifestyle and physical improvement. The objectives of the training are to take into account the individual characteristics of the personal in the process of physical training, to improve the intellectual abilities of the students.

In recent years, the term sports education has become more and more popular, focused on the formation of a conscious and active sporting habits, organizing a healthy lifestyle. Sports education in the higher school contributes to multilateral and harmonious development and to building a better attitude towards physical exercises and sports.

Sports activity in the higher education institution as a pedagogical process is aimed at harmonizing the motor and intellectual activity of the personality, stimulating the physical, motor and psycho-emotional development of the young people. The aim is to develop the sport culture as a set of knowledge, information about different types of sports, needs and habits for regular practice of some sports (Georgiev, 2007:511-515). The tasks of physical education and sport in the higher school are related to:

- ✓ obtaining theoretical knowledge;
- ✓ formation and improvement of the basic driving habits of the technique of the chosen sport;
- ✓ development of physical qualities;
- ✓ Improvement of motor skills, habits and qualities that contribute to the successful practice of the specialty studied;
- ✓ counteracting fatigue in students;
- ✓ forming a positive attitude towards exercises (Stoev, 2013).

In general, the principles on which sporting activity is based are the versatility and harmony of physical development, the health-prophylactic orientation of the impact and the recreational-relaxing nature. These principles require the use of methods and tools aimed at reducing disproportions in the physical development of students due to insufficient motor activity and irrational nutrition, focus on health care, reducing mental fatigue and nervous tensions from the intellectual activity of students.

Physical education and sports programs for the various higher education institutions are increasingly taking on the components aimed at forming a personality culture, a healthy lifestyle, developing motivation to increase motor activity and sports activities. There are three components in the curriculum - social-psychological, intellectual and motoric. The socio-psychological component is associated with the process of assimilating the values - of sports culture; the intellectual component - with a complex of theoretical knowledge covering philosophical, medical, pedagogical and other knowledge in the field of physical education and sport; motor activity develops motor skills, skills and habits to manage movements as well as to use their own physical potential.

To improve the organization of the discipline "Sport", there is a free choice of form and intensity of the classes, which contribute to the physical improvement and health promotion, and are often preferred to non-

traditional forms of sporting activities, replacing the traditional forms of organizing the learning process. The importance of attracting students to participate in mass sports events and sports teams is pointed out.

Technology for fitness training of students at the Sofia University "St. Kl. Ohridski"

The new vision of the system of physical education and sports in Bulgaria is related to the establishment of a functioning system for the promotion of motor activity and the practice of sport and social tourism by the citizens as a factor for achieving a significant social effect.

In this respect, fitness is recognized as a type of sport with a very wide public scope and can make a significant contribution to increasing the sporting activity of people of different ages. The establishment of a system of fitness training at the higher school, which will increase the sport activity and the physical capacity of the students, is a prerequisite for creating optimal conditions for combining the acquired profession by higher education and continuing sporting activity, including in the sphere of sport for excellence.

Some of the high schools in Bulgaria already include the fitness in the various sports offered to the students. A large number of students increasingly choose to practice fitness in the university education system. In Sofia University "St. Kl. Ohridski" technology is applied to the students' fitness training, which is guided by the idea of overcoming the contradiction at the socio-pedagogical level between the increasing requirements of the contemporary society for the professional opportunities of the future specialists in the field of economics, culture, science and the lowering of the state of health and the physical activity and capacity of young people.

Physical training, which is represented at the universities in the discipline "*Physical Education and Sports*", is an essential component of the general culture of young people. Its purpose is to stimulate such values in students as: physical, mental and social well-being in order to improve human resources for life. Health care increases the reserve capacity of the body, promotes the professional capabilities of future professionals. In determining the future professional activities of students, health is also considered.

The problem of conserving and enhancing the health of learners is becoming more and more relevant: there is an increasing in the number of students with diseases affecting the most important organs and systems in the human body to support life. The main reasons for this situation are related to the lack of physical activity and the extremely weak emphasis on the formation and development of personally significant qualities of trainees, their different abilities, the lack of guidelines for maintaining and improving healthy lifestyle.

At the theoretical level, the aim of the proposed technology is to minimize the contradiction between the high health potential of physical activity and the lack of knowledge of its personalization in physical education of students. Personalization means the effective transformation of a student's

physical culture as the basis for individual adaptation to the conditions of activity in the particular society.

The importance of technology at the practical level is determined by updating pedagogical possibilities for personal use of different methods, techniques and forms for fitness training of students from Sofia University "St. Kl. Ohridski". Motor activity can be based on accumulated knowledge in the field of physical education, meaningful change of life stereotypes (diet, movement, etc.) and indirect effects on social components.

The motor activity is above all a personal activity of the individual in the field of physical culture and sport, which includes components providing basic knowledge of methodically competent physical improvement, personal motivation for physical training with increased emphasis on activity and lifestyle. In the higher education system, insufficient attention is paid to personalization in the process of physical education for the full realization of the person's abilities. In this respect, the training faces great prospects.

The aim of the proposed fitness technology for student education is to personalize the fitness training of students as the basis for individual adaptation to specific conditions and the acquisition of skills and habits for a healthy lifestyle.

What is new in technology is that it is not only geared towards the formation of physical qualities and vital motor skills and habits but is a system that provides knowledge for the preservation and strengthening of health and the need for a healthy lifestyle and physical improvement. The aim of the training is to take into account the individual characteristics of the person in the process of physical training, to overcome stressful situations and to stimulate the intellectual abilities of the students.

The technology stimulates not only motor activity, but also the psycho-emotional and intellectual development of young people, which aims at developing a fitness culture as a collection of knowledge, information about a healthy lifestyle, needs and habits for regular gymnastics and training.

References

- Act / Amend (2014). *Law on Physical Education and Sports*. Retrieved from <http://www.varnamladite.com/images/pubs/images/29/ZFVS.pdf> [09.21.2017].
- Bachvarov, M. (1995). Sporto - Science of Sport. *Sports and Science*, 49 (6), 61-64.
- Georgiev, A. (2007). On the Sports Culture of the Bulgarian Nation. *Sports and Science*, 61 (1), 511-515.
- Ivanov, St. (2012). *Sport and Students*. Blagoevgrad: IM "Neofit Rilski".
- Miletiev, St. (2017). Methodical system for fitness training of students from different specialties. In *VI Scientific and Educational Forum*. Sofia: University Publishing House "St. Kl. Ohridski".
- National Program (2016). *National Program for Development of Physical Education and Sport, 2013-2016*. Retrieved from <http://mpes.government.bg/Pages/Documents/Strategies/default.aspx> [09.18.2017].
- National Strategy (2012). *National Strategy for Development of Physical Education and Sport in the Republic of Bulgaria 2012-2022*. Retrieved from

http://mpes.government.bg/Documents/Documents/Strategii/Strategia_2012-2022.pdf [09.20.2017].

Regulations / Amend (2014). *Regulations on the Application of the Law on Physical Education and Sport*. Retrieved from

http://mpes.government.bg/Documents/Documents/Pravilnici/2014/PRAVILNIK_za_prilagane_na_Zakona_za_fiziceskoto_vyzpitanie_i_sporta.pdf [09.23.2017].

Stoev, S. (2013). *Model for management of the educational process in sport at the higher school. Autoresponder*. Blagoevgrad: SWU.